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ABSTRACT

The social and educational background and the educational and occupational aspirations of undergraduate students in Kenya were studied. The study sample consisted of 232 male and 210 female undergraduate students at Kenyatta University College. A questionnaire was administered to determine: students' characteristics, including sex, age, marital status, religion, home province, number of children for married students, birth order of the student, incidence of disability, and orientation to town life; family background, including parents' education, father's occupation, source of school fees, number of children in the family, support for younger siblings, and level of education of younger siblings; educational background, including school type and location, average class size, and academic performance; educational aspirations and expectations concerning the choice of study field and level of education desired; and occupational aspirations, including reasons for entering the teaching profession. The results indicate various educational, social, and personal characteristics that affect achievement levels and patterns of the college students. (SW)

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# WHO GOES TO UNIVERSITY IN KENYA:

# A STUDY OF SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF KENYAN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS.

By

PROFESSOR GEORGE S. ESHIWANI

Bureau of Educational Research
Kenyatta University College,
P.O. Box 43844,
NAIROBI, KENYA.

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G.S. Eshiwani

## Introduction:

University education in Kenya is relatively young compared to the lower cycles of the formal education system. Until 1965 there was no single institution in the country offering university degrees. In 1963 the University of East Africa was created comprising of three constituent Colleges: the Nairobi University College, Makerere University College and Dar-es-Salaam University College. Prior to 1963 Kenyans who wished to obtain degrees had to enrol either at Makerere for the University of London degrees or at Universities overseas in countries such as India, United Kingdom or United States of America.

The period following independence was characterised by an exponential expansion of both the public sector as well as the private sector. This created a pressing need for high-level manpower in many fields. This in turn dictated a rapid expansion of the local University. The divergent socio-economic developments that were taking place at that

time required that University education be given a more national character to help articulate national development policies. As a result, the University of Nairobi was established in 1970. In 1972, Kenyatta University College was established as a constituent College of the University. Enrolment at the two institutions has risen from 1279 students in 1970 to over 8000 students in 1982.

In addition to the existing national university, there are two private university institutions operating in Kenya. The Seventh Day Adventist College at Baraton in Nandi District which has been established to serve Eastern Africa is affliated to Andrews University in the USA. The United States International University was established in 1970 in Nairobi. It offers tuition to about 300 students on full or part-time basis in courses which are primarily oriented to business studies.

Because of the limited range of courses offered in the local institutions and the limited facilities at these institutions many Kenya students obtain their University education overseas. Table I shows the number of these students in various countries.

Selection to these university institutions, local and overseas, is extremely competitive. In most cases it is based

on the A-level examination results. Table II shows that despite its growth, the University of Nairobi has not been able to cope with the demand for university education. More than 70 per cent of the candidates who sit for A-level examinations have no hope of going on to the University. Secondly, if the number of these attending university were to be computed in relation to the total number of students in the formal school system, it would be found that this number represents less than one percent of those receiving formal education. It is no wonder that university students have often been refered to as "the privileged few". What kind of background do they come from? Does the actual selection for university education take place at the end of Form VI or does it start much ealier than that (at home, at school etc.)? These are some of the issues discussed in this paper.

There are two other issues related to the background of university students. The first concerns the relationship between social background and academic achievement at university. Research undertaken in this area indicates that students background has some effect on the general performance levels of the students. Nemzek (1940) found a positive relationship between education level of parents and students school achievement. James and Pafford (1973) found that children of college professors had a significantly higher achievement level than children of non-professorial parents. This variable although fascinating will not be discussed in this study.

TABLE I

Number of Kenya Students studying Abroad by by country of study, 1981

| Country | Number of Students |
|---|---|
| U.S.A. and Canada | 4,000 |
| United Kingdom | 1,200 |
| India | 1,000 |
| U.S.S.R. | 277 |
| Others | 375 |
| TOTAL | 6,852 |

Source: Second University in Kenya Report 1981, pp.15-16.

TABLE II

Number of Form VI Leavers and the Number of Candidates admitted into University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University College 1970-1979.

| Year | Form VI Leavers including Private Candidates. | Number admitted U)B & KUC | Number of Left-overs |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1970 | 2,672 | 1,279 | 1,393 |
| 1971 | 3,448 | 1,215 | 2,233 |
| 1972 | 3,953 | 1,641 | 2,312 |
| 1973 | 5,602 | 1,735 | 3,867 |
| 1974 | 6,459 | 1,469 | 4,990 |
| 1975 | 7,998 | 1,519 | 6,479 |
| 1976 | 7,493 | 1,804 | 5,689 |
| 1977 | 8,635 | 2,461 | 6,174 |
| 1978 | 8,429 | 2,292 | 5,837 |
| 1979 | 11,032 | 2,611 | 8,421 |

Sourse: University Grants Committee 1980-1983.

The second related issue concern students aspirations and expectations. Bookover (1967) holds the view that although the relationship between aspirations and expectations is not clear yet expectations correlate more highly with achievement than aspirations. Anyone concerned with the products of the University must inevitably be concerned with the aspirations and expectations of the students.

Purpose of the study:

The purpose of this study was to analyse the social background of undergraduate students in Kenya. The aim was to provide indepth analysis of these students by examining their general biodata, socia-background, educational background and their educational as well as occupational aspirations and expectations.

Sample:

The sample of this study consisted of 442 first year under-graduate students at Kenyatta University College. Of these students 232 were males and 210 females. The Ss were all enrolled in the Bachelor of Education degree programme.

Procedure:

Data was obtained from a questionnaire which was designed by the author and administered to the Ss. It was designed to collect pertinent data in regard to the following:

1) General biodata of the students viz; sex, age, marital status, religion, nationality, home province, number of children for the married students, birth order of the student, incidence of disability and orientation to town life.

2) Socio-Economic background - parental education and attendence in part-time studies, fathers occupation, source of school fees, number of children in the family, support for younger brothers and sisters, level of education of the younger sisters and brothers.

3) Educational background of the student - schools locality, type and category of schools attended, basis and extent of streaming in the school, average class-size, performance at O and A-level by subjects.

4) Students education aspirations and expectations - order of choice of faculty, level of education aspiration and expectation.

5) Students occupational aspirations and expectations - reasons for entering teaching profession, factors influencing decision to

become a teacher, reaction of members of family, to the decision, indication of need to change profession.

Results:

1. General Biodata of the students

Data obtained in this section showed that 52.5% of the students were male, while 45.5% were female. This tendency towards parity between the sexes is a recent phenomenon in the University education in Kenya (Eshiwani; 1982). About 292 (66.1 percent) of the students were in the age range 20 - 23 years, 102 (23.1 percent) were in the range 18-20 years, the rest 48 (10.8 percent) were above 23 years of age. Thus majority of the students joining university were below 23 years of age. In regard to marital status, 425 (96.2%) of the students were single while only 17 (3.8%) were married. This can be explained on the basis of the nature of the economic burden of maintaining a family, considering that most of these students were not yet economically self reliant at the time of admission to the university.

Religion:

There are three important components in human life: the soul, the intellect and the body. While university education is concerned largely with the intellectual life of the students, it must also be concerned with the spiritual being of these

students. It was with this in mind that I was interested to find out the religious background of the Ss in this study. Majority of the students, 97.5 percent, professed to be Christians with/rest indicating to be Muslims, Hindus, /the etc. Among those Ss who claimed to be Christians, 64.9 percent were Protestants and 32.6 percent Catholics. This statistic should be of great use to those planning for pastoral care at University.

Regional Composition:

One of the most sensitive issues in educational research is the question of equity. There are those who do not believe in equity and dismiss any discussion of this issue as being purely political. On the other hand there are those who believe that everyone should be given equal educational opportunity to develop to the highest possible level. The University is the highest academic institution in the country. It is therefore interesting to find out how different regions are represented at this higher institution of learning in relation to their population. Table III shows the percentage distribution of the population by province and the students representation at the university for the data collected in this study.

Because of the local character of the University, 99.1 percent of the Ss in this study were Kenyans. Table III shows that regionally, Central Province is over-represented

followed by Western and Nyanza Provinces while Nairobi, Coast, North-Eastern and Rift-Valley are under-represented. Since admission to the university is strictly based on the A-level examination results, there are two conclusions that can be drawn from the above statistic. First, there are inequalities in the distribution of Sixth Form classes: Certain provinces have more classes than they should be entitled to. Secondly, there are great variations in examination performance between the provinces. Factors that cause these variations should be an interesting area of research. Eshiwani (1982) has done some preliminary work on this with regard to Western Province. In addition to examining factors that affect achievement at school, criteria for admission into the higher institutions of learning should go to the university or not. While it might be a valid selection instrument it could be greatly sharpened by adding to it other criteria. I am especially concerned with students from the less economically developed areas of the country such as the arid and semi-arid parts of North-Eastern and Coast.

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TABLE III

Percentage Distribution of Population by province and students representative.

| Province | Population Percent | University Representation percent. |
|---|---|---|
| Nairobi | 5.4 | 3.6 |
| Central | 15.3 | 28.1 |
| Coast | 8.8 | 3.2 |
| Eastern | 17.7 | 17.9 |
| North-Eastern | 2.4 | 0.5 |
| Nyanza | 17.3 | 17.2 |
| Rift Valley | 21.1 | 11.5 |
| Western | 12.0 | 18.1 |

The Birth Order:

There were two reasons for studying the birth order of the Ss in this study. First, we would be able to gauge the age-range of the parents of the students and secondly we would be able to assess the students responsibility towards their families. Our results showed that 19.7 percent of Ss were first borns, 22.5 percent were second borns, 16.3 percent third borns and 18.6 percent fourth borns. This implies that

the majority of the students going to university had relatively young parents. Because of this it does seem that not more than 50 percent of the students would have a major financial responsibility towards their sisters and brothers. This is in contrast to university students of the 1960s and earlier who had heavy extended family financial problems even while at university. In our sample only 19.1 percent of Ss were giving any financial support to their sisters and brothers. This situation where only a small number of students feel obligated to their family is incompatible with the tenets of African socialism which demands family responsibility of all the family members.

Disability:

In recent years there has been much effort towards giving opportunity to the less fortunate members of our society, the disabled. This has been more so in education. The extent to which these efforts have yielded fruit especially at the tertiary level of formal education has not been documented. In our sample we found that 4.1 percent of the Ss had some kind of disability. In terms of numbers, this was a very small representation of the total student population at university.

Geographical mobility:

One of the major aims of education is to instil the spirit of national unity into the students. While this can be achieved through many school activities, interaction between people from different regions of the country is perhaps one of the best approaches. This approach helps students to minimise their prejudices and prepares them for service in areas outside their home districts.

In our sample 10.4 percent of the Ss said that they had never been outside their home province before coming to the university; 7.5 percent had never been to Nairobi, 8.4 percent had been to Nairobi once and 16.1 percent had been to Nairobi twice or thrice. This means that about one third of the university students have little exposure to areas outside their home areas and especially to urban life. It follows that these students get a culture shock when they join the university situated in the heart of the city, and mix for first time with people from different backgrounds. To survive, some of them keep within intact "home-groups". Those who do not survive, find outlets which are often not socially acceptable.

In recognition of some of these defiences in freshmen, the university runs one week of orientation for all freshmen. In addition to this effort, schools should encourage greater interaction between students of different regions of the country and strong counselling

services should be established at the university campuses.

2. Socio-economic status:

Socio-economic status (SES) is a very difficult variable to categorise especially in the third world countries. This is because indices of categorisation ir black Africa are almost non-existent. This may be in part due to non-existence of distinct classes in Africa. Where classes exist, they may not necessarily be based on the socio-economic status. There may be based on political orientation, or on a multiplicity of other diffuse variables e.g. ethnic group, geographical / among others. /origin

The author therefore had to depend on the information given by the Ss regarding parental education, fathers occupation, source of school fees and so on to assess their SES.

Data on parents' education is summarised in Table IV below. 74.3% of the Ss had fathers with at most primary education. 22.9% of whom had no formal education.

TABLE IV

PARENTAL EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND (PERCENT)

| | No schooling | Lower Primary Std.1-4 | Upper primary Std.5-8 | Secondary School | University |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Father | 22.9 | 28.1 | 23.3 | 20.6 | 4.8 |
| Mother | 42.3 | 30.1 | 19.0 | 7.2 | 1.4 |

In the case of mothers' education 91.4% of the Ss had mothers whose highest level of education was primary education. 42.3% of the mothers had no formal schooling and only 1.4% of them had University level of education. In addition to this, 41.0% of the Ss fathers had some kind of part-time courses in comparison to 58.6% who did not have any. In the same context there were only 27.8% of the mothers who had attended some part-time courses in comparison to 70.8% who did not attend any. This data offers grounds for concluding that majority of the subjects had parents who had little or no formal schooling.

Data was also obtained for the occupation of fathers of the Ss. The results showed that 48.4 percent of the fathers were peasant farmers, 14.3 percent were teachers 3.2 percent were large-scale farmers, 5.9 percent were clerical officers, 2.0 percent were non-executive or industrial workers, 7.7% executives, 7.0% Businessmen and only 0.5% were politicians. In summary the majority of the students had a peasantry background while still a large proportion of the students' fathers featured strongly in the less prestigious occupations. The proportion of students whose fathers were teachers was considerable, indicating that the students whose fathers are teachers take a large slice of university admission probably due to receiving encouragement or inspiration from their parents to pursue further education.

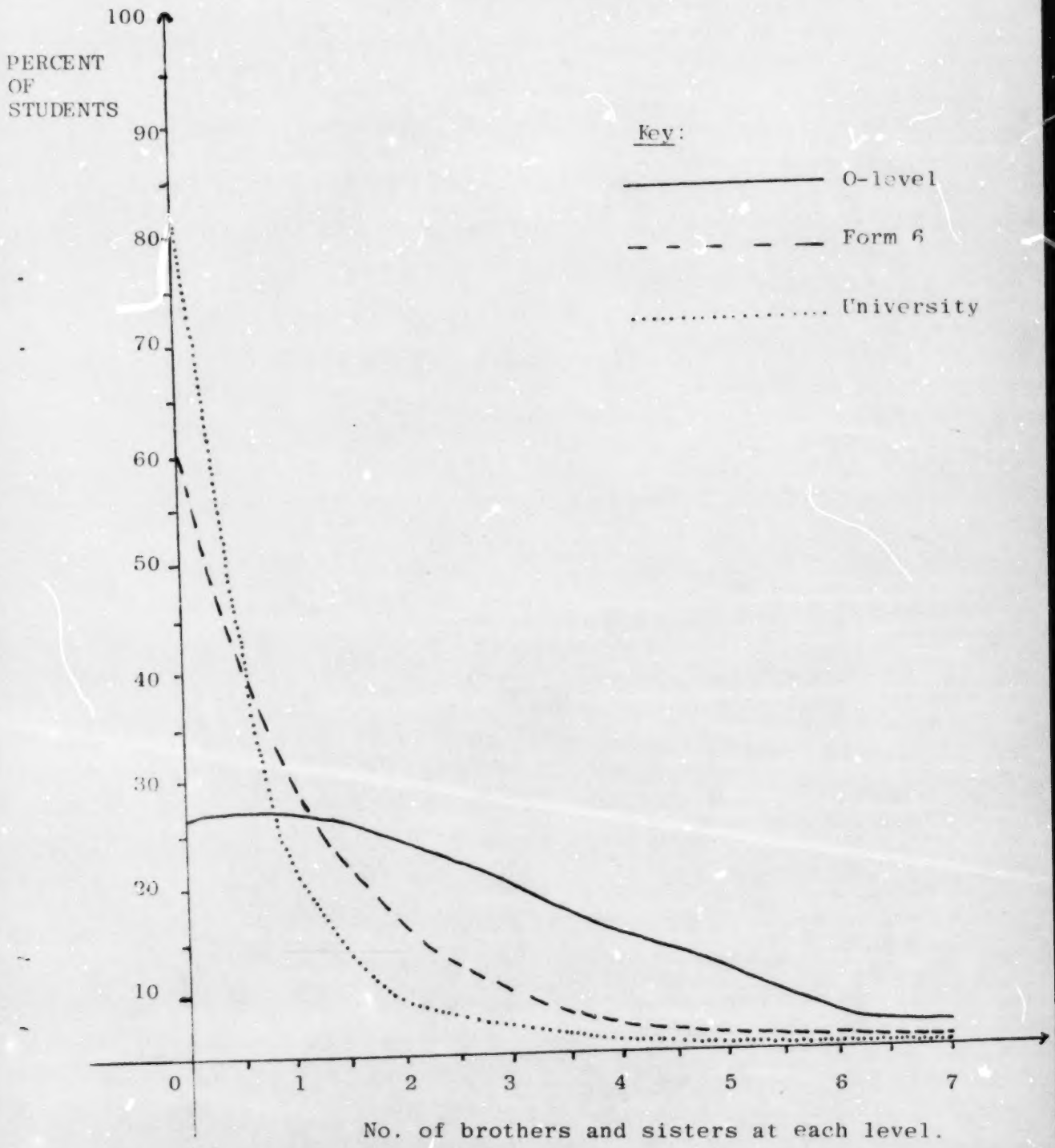
Data was obtained on the main source of school fees. This was an indicator of the economic level of the parents. Results showed that 39.8% of the Ss got fees from fathers salary, 36.4% from their family shamba produce, 11.8% from brothers or sisters' salary, 4.3% from uncle or relatives slary, 2.5% from mothers salary and only 2.3% from the family shop. A few conclusions can be drawn from these data. First, there appears to be a general shift from the former general responsibility of relatives to provide school fees. Secondly, brothers and sisters take on more of the responsibilities for providing school fees for the younger ones. Still, most people depend on the produce from the family shamba. It is also worthwhile to note the general tendency of mothers taking on the responsibility of education of their children. Education is no longer the sole responsibility of man as the head of the household.

Another indicator of the economic burden to the family is the number of children in the family. Data obtained in regard to this indicated that 47.0% of the Ss came from families with 7-8 children, 32.0% from families with 5-6 children, 13.0% from families with 9 or more children and 1.4% from families with 1-2 children. The mean number of children in the family was found to be 7 or 8 children. This clearly indicates that most Ss came from families with a lot of

children, a reflection of the economic burden on these families. The same families have to provide school fees for the children and also adequate food to them, yet the same families are mostly going to depend on undefined source of income since most are peasants and/or workers in origin.

Data was obtained on levels of education reached by the other brothers and sisters related to the Ss. This is presented graphically in fig. 1. For all levels (Form IV, Form VI, and and university)the number decreases from none to seven or more children. The decline in number of brothers and sisters who have reached each level decreases as you go down the levels. Thus University had the least number. The percentage decrease is sharp in all levels as one moves from no brothers or sisters to seven or more brothers or sisters, but it is gradual for Form IV level. Thus as one goes higher in levels of education the number of brothers and sisters decrease considerably. The implication here is that most of these students were the most educated in their own families.

Fig: I. PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHOSE BROTHERS AND SISTERS HAVE COMPLETED PARTICULAR LEVELS OF EDUCATION



3. Education Background of the Students:

Data obtained on the schools the students attended revealed that 15.9% attended schools in Kiambu, 9.8% attended schools in Nairobi, 8.7% in Kakamega, 5.2% in Nyeri, 5.9% in Meru, 4.8% in Bungoma and Machakos for each, 4.6% in Kisii, 3.4% each for Kirinyaga, Siaya, Kericho and Nakuru districts, 3.6% in South Nyanza. All other districts had smaller proportions of students excluding Lamu, Kiolo, Marsabit, Garissa, Kajiado, Turkana which did not have any students coming to the University. There was definite bias of students from schools in Nairobi, Kiambu, Kakamega, Nyeri, Meru, Bungoma, Meru and Machakos. There is a conspicuous absence of students from schools in the other districts. This probably has a lot to do with the whole question of inequality of educational opportunities in different regions of the country. This question needs to be investigated in greater detail.

As regards the kind of schools attended by students up to Form IV results show that 40.3% came from boys schools, 41.6% from girls schools and 18.1% from mixed schools. Thus the proportion of students from girls schools was larger than that for students from boy's schools. Mixed schools are underrepresented.

Data obtained in regard to type of school attended up to Form IV revealed that 71.3% of the students had attended boarding schools, 14.7% boarding and day combined and 14.0% had attended day school. Thus majority of students in the university had boarding schools background. This may have some implications on their socialization at University.

Both men and women students find themselves for the first time in a relatively free university environment. This university atmosphere often causes moral conflicts among some students. The high proportion of pregnancies among the women students has been blamed on this ungirded freedom.

Schools attended were also put into further categorization. 81.8% of the students came from Government low-cost schools, 7.5% came from Government high cost schools, 6.6% from Harambee secondary schools and 4.1% from private schools. This implies clearly that even though students from Harambee and Private schools are restricted by bottlenecks in the education system, preventing their access to education, we have some surviving through thick and thin up to the university. There is a good need to examine closely the nature and extent of their access to university education. However, 6.6% of students coming from Harambee schools is still small proportion considering

that the proportion of Harambee schools in Kenya is higher than that of Government schools (there are 1,255 Harambee and Private secondary schools compared to 557 Government maintained schools).

The Ss were also asked to indicate whether the schools they attended were missionary or not. The results indicate that 53.8% came from missionary schools while 46.2% came from schools with no missionary status. The implication here is that missionary schools still play a significant role in the advancement of education in Kenya.

As regards the nature and extent of streaming in the schools the students came from, our data revealed that 19.1% of the students came from schools with one stream. 41.9% from schools with three streams, 8.0% from schools with more than five streams. The mean for the number of streams per school was two streams. When two and three streamed schools were combined their total contribution amounted to 66.7% of the students. Thus one stream or more than three streams per school were not favoured in the admission of students to the university. The explanation is that single stream classes did not promote competition necessary for orienting students to pass external examinations, and more than three streams are not manageable in terms of the sharing of resources available.

The Ss were asked to state how streaming was done in their schools. Results indicate that 44.4% came from schools in which the basis of streaming was the certificate of Primary Education results, 14.4% end of the first year examination in Form I; 17.8% end of second year examination and about 23.3% according to the students'ability in Maths or Science subjects. Thus the basis of streaming in most schools is mostly either according to C.P.E results or according to ability in Mathematics or Science subjects. The basis of streaming and its effect on performance in examinations and probably on access to higher education needs more than a casual mention. More research should be done on this issue.

Further, data was obtained on the average class size in which the schools in the Ss came from. Results showed that 6.4% of the Ss came from schoolswhere class size was between 25 and 30 students- 63.8% - between 31 and 40 students; 28.5% - between 40 and 50 students per class. The mean class size obtained from this data was between 31 and 40 students. Too few students or too many students per class are not favoured in most schools. This can easily be explained on the basis of: the extent of 'healthy' competition, teachers access or availability to students, teachers attention on every student, extent of sharing the available resources, nature and extent of feedback etc.

Analysis of the performance of students in the O-level examination is summarised in Table V. Considering the mean grades obtained by students, Religious knowledge was the best done with a mean grade of 3, and also music with mean grade 3, followed by Geography, Literature, Agriculture, Commerce, Home Science, Health Science and Technical Drawing each with a mean grade of 4. The other subjects had been taken by very small proportions of the students. Thus in music 95.2% of the students did not take it, Technical Drawing 95.0%, Agriculture 83.5, Commerce 88.0%, Home Science 85.3% and Health Science 98.8%.

Among tne popular subjects (which had been taken by majority of the students), Geography was the best done with 7.5% of the students obtaining a distinction 1 and 11.3% obtaining distinction 2; Religious Knowledge, 5.0% obtained distinction 1 and 9.7% obtained distinction 2; in Mathematics, 4.7%obtained distinction 1 and 9.0% obtained distinction 2; In English Language 3.8% obtained distinction 1 and 12.4% distinction 2. Physics and Chemistry, Physical Science, History were not done by 74.9%, 70.6%, 60.0%, 52.9% of the students respectively. In effect the mean grades of the subjects indicate that the quality of the students admitted into education were weak according to the performance standards at O-level. Secondly, there is a glaring deficiency in science education among university students.

TABLE V

PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS AT O-LEVEL EXAMINATION (PERCENT)

| SUBJECT | Mean grade | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | N/A |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mathematics | 5 | 4.1 | 9.0 | 27.4 | 8.6 | 6.1 | 14.3 | 10.0 | 8.6 | 8.8 | 3.2 |
| Physics | 5 | 0.2 | 0.9 | 4.8 | 2.9 | 3.6 | 4.3 | 3.6 | 3.4 | 1.4 | 74.9 |
| Chemistry | 5 | 0.2 | 1.6 | 9.5 | 3.6 | 2.9 | 5.0 | 3.8 | 1.8 | 0.9 | 70.6 |
| Physical Science | 5 | 1.1 | 3.4 | 11.8 | 2.7 | 4.8 | 6.6 | 4.5 | 3.6 | 0.9 | 60.6 |
| Biology | 5 | 0.5 | 5.2 | 21.0 | 12.2 | 11.5 | 24.9 | 9.7 | 3.2 | 0.5 | 11.3 |
| Geography | 4 | 7.5 | 11.3 | 35.5 | 11.1 | 10.4 | 9.3 | 4.3 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 10.2 |
| *English Language | 5 | 3.8 | 6.1 | 21.5 | 16.2 | 12.0 | 25.1 | 10.6 | 5.9 | 2.7 | 2.0 |
| Swahili | 5 | 3.2 | 6.1 | 12.7 | 6.8 | 6.3 | 9.0 | 6.8 | 4.3 | 3.2 | 41.6 |
| Literature | 4 | 3.6 | 12.4 | 21.7 | 9.0 | 8.4 | 9.0 | 3.6 | 2.3 | 0.9 | 29.0 |
| Music | 3 | 0.5 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 0.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 95.2 |
| Religious Knowl. | 3 | 5.0 | 9.7 | 28.1 | 8.8 | 6.3 | 2.7 | 0.0 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 39.1 |
| Technical/ Drawing | 4 | 0.5 | 0.2 | 1.6 | 0.0 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 95.0 |
| Agriculture | 4 | 0.0 | 1.1 | 8.1 | 2.9 | 2.0 | 1.8 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 83.5 |
| Commerce | 4 | 0.9 | 1.8 | 2.9 | 1.1 | 1.4 | 1.6 | 1.8 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 88.0 |
| Home Science | 4 | 0.7 | 0.9 | 4.5 | 2.5 | 0.5 | 5.4 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 85.3 |
| History | 5 | 1.6 | 2.7 | 11.8 | 5.9 | 6.1 | 8.1 | 7.0 | 3.2 | 0.7 | 52.9 |
| Health Science | 4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.9 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 98.6 |
| Others | | 1.1 | 2.5 | 5.0 | 2.5 | 1.8 | 2.9 | 1.4 | 0.9 | 0.2 | 81.7 |

Analysis of performance at O-level by aggregate points obtained by students show that 95.7% of the students obtained Division 1, 3.4% got Division II, 0.2% obtained E.A.C.E. Certificate and 0.7% actually failed. It is not clear how those who had EACE or fail gained access to A-level and eventually to university. Possibly these were private candidates at A-level or they obtained access to these levels by other unspecified means.

Performance of students at A-level is summarised in Table VI. The results indicate that Religious knowledge was the best done subject with 2.3% of the students obtaining grade A and 9.1% obtaining grade B; History and Economics followed with 0.2% of the students obtaining grade A for each. Other subjects done well on average were maths with 0.2% obtaining grade A and English literature with 0.2% of the students obtaining grade A. All other subjects, were done poorly with majority of the students obtaining grades C, D or E. This has a definite effect on the quality of the students who were expected to be teachers.

TABLE VI

A-LEVEL RESULTS OF THE STUDENTS (PERCENT)

| SUBJECTS | GRADE A | B | C | D | E | SUBSIDIARY | F+ | N/A |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Maths | 0.2 | 1.4 | 3.6 | 9.7 | 13.6 | 3.4 | 65.8 | |
| Physics | - | - | 1.4 | 7.9 | 7.9 | 3.5 | 79.4 | |
| Chemistry | - | 0.5 | 2.1 | 5.7 | 12.0 | 12.9 | 66.9 | |
| Biology | - | 1.1 | 2.7 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 3.7 | 72.4 | |
| Geography | - | 4.1 | 11.2 | 17.2 | 11.9 | 1.4 | 53.9 | |
| Economics | 0.5 | 5.1 | 5.3 | 5.1 | 2.3 | 1.1 | 80.7 | |
| History | 0.2 | 3.7 | 8.5 | 6.7 | 2.5 | 0.9 | 77.3 | |
| Eng. Literature | 0.2 | 3.4 | 10.1 | 12.2 | 6.7 | 1.1 | 66.2 | |
| Religion | 2.3 | 9.1 | 11.6 | 5.9 | 2.1 | 0.7 | 68.0 | |
| Swahili | - | 3.0 | 6.1 | 3.4 | 2.5 | 1.1 | 82.7 | |
| Other | 0.2 | 1.4 | 2.3 | 2.7 | 3.9 | 1.6 | 85.9 | |
| Grade | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 8 | 9 |
| General Paper | 1.4 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 6.6 | 15.0 | 45.9 | 6.6 3.9 | 16.1 |

Assuming that there will be no failures, repeaters or dropouts among the Ss throughout their period of academic pursuit, the prospective number of graduates expected from our sample is as follows: 126 Mathematics teachers; 74 Physics teachers; 88 Chemistry teachers; 105 Biology teachers; 194 Geography teachers; 79 in Economics; 95 in History; 142 in English Literature; 136 in Religious Education and 66 in Swahili. These numbers should be considered in the light of the numbers of teachers needed per subject in the secondary schools in Kenya. The figures appear too small for the ever increasing student population at secondary schools.

Analysis of aggregate points obtained by the students at A-level is presented in Table V II. Results show that 1.6% obtained 18 points; 11.2% obtained 13-17 points; 46.6% obtained 10-12 points; 13.5% got 8-9 points; 24.9% got 7 points and 0.7% obtained less than 7 points. In summary, the majority of the students obtained between 7 and 12 points. A peculiar observation made was that some students with less than the minimum requirements for admission also gained access into university. These are mainly Kenya Science Teachers College graduates who are admitted to university as special cases. Further, the average grades obtained by students in general show that those admitted had relatively lower grades than was the case in other faculties within the university.

This could have long term implications on the the quality of education in the secondary schools. Ironically the low quality teachers would be expected to serve large numbers of students in our schools, further deteriorating the learning outcomes expected of the pupils in the schools.

TABLE VII

AGGREGATE POINTS OBTAINED BY STUDENTS AT A-LEVEL

| | % | N |
|---|---|---|
| Over 18 points | 1.6 | 7 |
| 13 - 17 points | 11.2 | 48 |
| 10 - 12 points | 46.6 | 200 |
| 8 - 9 points | 13.5 | 58 |
| 7 points | 24.9 | 107 |
| Less than 7 points | 0.7 | 3 |

4. Educational aspirations and expectations of the students

Students choice of faculty can be used as an indicator of his/her educational aspirations; it can also indicate his career orientation and professional attitude. Data was therefore collected in regard to Ss' first choice of faculty

when applying to join university. Among the Ss 48% indicated Education, 13.0% Engineering, 10.9% Commerce, 6.1% Medicine 6.6% Agriculture, 5.7% law, 3.6% Veterinary Science and 3.0% Science. Thus 52% of the students admitted into Education, had not chosen the faculty as a major priority choice. Thus they were actually in a profession, they did not seriously choose and therefore ill oriented.

To obtain data on the actual educational aspirations, the Ss were asked to indicate the highest level of education they hoped to attain. They were asked to consider their interests and abilities only, without taking into account other factors. 3.2% indicated first degree, 11.1% indicated first degree and professional qualification, 26.1% Masters degree, and 59.1% chose Ph.D. Thus the students had very high Education aspirations.

In regard to their Educational Expectations, they were asked to realistically consider their abilities, family responsibilities and financial situation before indicating the level of education they expected to attain. 17.3% gave first degree, 22.6% gave first degree and professional qualifiaction, 23.9% gave Masters degree and 35.8% gave Ph.D./ find this to be I rather unrealistic expectation considering that at any given graduation ceremony at the University of Nairobi not more than six people receive the Ph.D degree.

5. Occupational aspiration and attitudes to the teaching profession:

The Ss were asked to state the jobs they wished to take up after their university education. They were asked to answer this question while taking into account their talents and abilities: 74.3 percent of the Ss chose teaching, 18.7 per cent chose University teaching, 3.0 per cent chose civil service and 2.3 per cent chose jobs in the industrial sector. This shows that although these students were enrolled in the Faculty of Education, a significant number of them were not interested in teaching.

The Ss were further asked to indicate their reasons for entering the teaching profession: The results summarised in table VIII show that the most important reasons were as follows:

1. I like children and I feel happy when young people seek my guidance. 44.6%

2. Teachers enjoy their contacts with the young and their parents and are responsible for success of children in examinations. 39.8%

3. There is a shortage of teachers in Kenya so I decided to join teaching 28.7%

4. Young people need local teachers who inderstand their ways of life, traditions and beliefs. 28.7%

TABLE VIII

MAIN REASONS GIVEN BY STUDENTS FOR ENTERING THE TEACHNING PROFESSION.

| Reason | N* | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 1. There is a shortage of teachers in Kenya so I decided to join teaching. | 127 | 28.7 |
| 2. Teachers have a good salary and a secure job. | 51 | 11.5 |
| 3. Teachers have better chances of promotion than other professionals. | 34 | 7.7 |
| 4. I like children and feel happy when young seek my guidance. | 197 | 44.6 |
| 5. Young people need local teachers who understand their ways of life traditions and beliefs. | 127 | 28.7 |
| 6. I was born a teacher and never thought of entering other professions | 71 | 16.1 |
| 7. There wasn't really any other choice left to me as I had not done my exams very well | 69 | 15.6 |
| 8. Teachers get a lot of holidays which they can use to attend other businesses | 54 | 12.2 |
| 9. Teachers are highly respected people, | 43 | 9.8 |
| 10. Teachers enjoy their contacts with the young and their parents and are responsible for success of children in exams. | 176 | 39.8 |

*Number of students who felt the reason was good enough.

In regard to career choices, socializing agents like parents, schools, friends etc. usually have a role to play in influencing the students. Data was obtained in regard to this aspect. They had been asked to state who had been the most influential person on them to become teachers. 77.2% indicated that it was a personal choice, not influenced by anybody else; 5.9% stated that it was a suggestion by career masters, 6.2% gave it / parents recommendation, 3.4% indicated that it was /was friends suggestion, 1.8% due to family circumstances and 5.4% as due to other unspecified reasons. Thus it is worth noting that most students had been left on their own to decide on career choices. Most did not have enough guidance as to which career they should choose. This would call for more concerted efforts by career masters, parents and other authorities in regard to career choice by students.

To follow this up it was necessary to find out if their choices had been supported by the same socializing agents. Therefore they were asked to state how their friends and families had reacted to their choices of career as teachers. 57.3% indicated that their friends and families liked the idea very much, 25 0% indicated that they did not really care, 14.4% stated that they did not like the idea but accepted it, 3.2% opposed the idea very much. This is an important observation, that we have some students in the profession whose career choice as teachers are in open conflict with family or friends'

expectations. This could be reflected in the stability of teachers in the profession. These teachers would always be attempting to change the profession as they would never be settled in the profession at all.

In order to supplement this finding data was obtained on whether they would change the profession if the opportunity arose. Results show that 8.6% indicated that they would certainly, only 24.9% were not fully decided, 52.0% would change depending on prospects in other professions; only 14.5% indicated that they would never. Thus only the 14.5% were fully decided on becoming teachers and to continue in the profession. The rest would oscillate between the career and other fields or they would definitely change. Such an observation has distinct implication on their attitudes towards teaching and hence on the way they would carry out their duties.

Students were further asked what profession(s) enjoyed the highest social status according to their opinions. Results given in Table IX show that 35.1% chose the teacher, 22.4% chose a politician and 18.6% chose a Doctor etc. Thus we note that 64.1% felt that they were in a profession which enjoys less social status than most others. This may have far reaching implication on the teachers efficiency, devotion to duty and interest in the profession.

TABLE IX

PROFESSION ENJOYING THE HIGHEST SOCIAL STATUS: STUDENT RESPONSE

| Profession | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Doctor | 82 | 18.6 |
| Lawyer | 26 | 5.9 |
| Teacher | 155 | 35.1 |
| Farmer | 11 | 2.5 |
| Politician | 99 | 22.4 |
| Civil Servant | 15 | 3.4 |
| Businessman | 23 | 5.2 |
| Priest | 29 | 6.6 |

## CONCLUSION

The purpose envisaged for this study was to analyse some social economic data of first year students at Kenyatta University College. The results indicate that there are various educational, social as well as personal charecteristics which could be of importance in discerning achievement levels and patterns for the students in University.Some of the variable may be useful in the selection and placement of students for degree courses at the University in the improvement of teachers quality and effectiveness in secondary schools, and in the development of positive attitudes to the teaching profession as a whole, especially in the endeavour

to make our secondary schools teachers realize the potential talents as members of a society that entrusts its members on them to prepare them as future actors, role playing members of their society.

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